



Editorial endogamy in some Latin American dental journals

Endogamia autoral em algumas revistas odontológicas latino-americanas

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ABSTRACT

Objective: Scientific publication in a journal by a member of the editorial committee of the same journal is known as authorial endogamy. To determine the presence of authorial endogamy in some Latin American dental journals. **Material and Methods:** Observational, descriptive, retrospective study. Eight dental journals from Brazil, Cuba and Chile indexed to Scopus in the period of 2018 - 2021 were analyzed. An evaluation was made of the manuscripts that include a member of the editorial committee as author. The results were expressed in percentages and frequency measurements and for the bivariate analysis, the Mann-Whitney U test and Fisher's exact test were used ($p < 0.05$). **Results:** A total of 2026 articles, from which 14.52% ($n = 256$), of authorial endogamy were found. The endogamy articles were mostly original articles 98.05% ($n = 252$), experimental design 39.70% ($n = 102$), advisory council 49.36% ($n = 153$), co-authorship position 58.97% ($n = 184$), with presence of 1 endogamic author per article 82.94% ($n = 214$), the number of days from submission to acceptance were statistically lower in endogamic articles ($p = 0.003$). **Conclusion:** The presence of editorial endogamy in some dental journals in Latin America was low, this finding is more frequent in original articles, mostly from the advisory board and as co-author. Additionally; it was found that endogamic articles took less days in editorial process.

KEYWORDS

Editorial policies; Ethics in scientific publication; Electronic journals; Latin America; Endogamy authorial (DeCS).

RESUMO

Objetivo: A publicação científica em uma revista por um membro do comitê editorial da mesma revista é conhecido como endogamia autoral. Determinar a presença de endogamia autoral em algumas revistas odontológicas na América Latina. **Material e Métodos:** Estudo retrospectivo observacional e descritivo. Oito revistas odontológicas do Brasil, Cuba e Chile, indexadas na Scopus no período entre 2018 - 2021 foram analisadas. Foi realizada uma avaliação dos artigos que incluíam autores membros do comitê editorial. Os resultados foram expressos em porcentagem e medidas de frequência, e para a análise de biviância foram utilizados o teste de Mann-Whitney U e teste exato de Fisher ($p < 0,05$). **Resultados:** Foi um total de 2026 artigos, entre os quais 14,52% ($n = 256$) foram detectados endogamia autoral. Os artigos endogâmicos foram, em sua maioria, artigos originais 98,05% ($n = 252$), desenho experimental 39,70% ($n = 102$), conselho consultivo 49,36% ($n = 153$), em posição de co-autoria 58,97% ($n = 184$), com a presença de 1 autor endogâmico por autor 82,94% ($n = 214$), e o número de dias desde a submissão até o aceite foram estatisticamente menores em artigos endogâmicos ($p = 0,003$). **Conclusão:** A presença de endogamia editorial em algumas revistas odontológicas na América Latina foi baixa, sendo este achado mais frequente em artigos originais, predominantemente em conselho consultivo e como co-autor. Adicionalmente, foi observado que artigos endogâmicos levaram menos dias no processo editorial.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Políticas editoriais; Ética na publicação científica; Periódicos eletrônicos; América Latina; Autoria endogâmica (DeCS).

INTRODUCTION

The importance of evidence-based dentistry is recognized, since current times demand ethical and high-quality articles [1]. The main purpose of an investigation is the search and generation of knowledge. It can also be a primary tool in dental education to train the next generation of leaders in oral health care [2].

Dentistry is a medical discipline with a growing scientific production in recent years [3], this increase has also been reflected in the last 20 years in Latin America and the Caribbean, but it is still one of the regions with the lowest publication in the world [4]. According to the Scimago Journal & Country Rank in its 2022 edition, 39,133 articles were produced in Latin America in the period from 1996 to 2021 [5].

If the results of the research are not published, and/or the place where they are published also has an important impact, since other researchers will not be able to appreciate the value of the scientific evidence generated, causing a negative impact on the development and growth of dentistry [6]. Currently, scientific journals play a fundamental role in such commendable work, since it is considered the main means of disseminating research [7].

Endogamy is defined as «social attitude of refusal to integrate members outside the own group or institution» [8]. There are behaviors that can be considered endogamic. First would be to prefer research by the editors themselves or by researchers from their circle, from the university itself, instead of other articles that may have greater scientific value, but that lack a link with the journal. With what privileges the person against the scientific value, and in second place the self-citations [9].

Scientific publication in a journal by a member of the editorial committee of the same journal is known as either authorial endogamy [10] or endogenous publication [11] self-publishing [12], lately open science and editorial policies mention the degree of endogamy of scientific journals that do not escape the observation of the authors to decide to publish in a specific journal [13].

Previous studies have studied this particularity in original articles from a Peruvian public health journal, finding a prevalence of

23.17% [14]. However; there is still no research in the literature that evaluates editorial endogamy in dental journals in Latin America.

Therefore, the objective of the present study was to estimate the presence of editorial endogamy in some dental journals in Latin America, during 2018 to 2021.

METHODS

Design

Observational, descriptive, retrospective study.

Population and sample

Scientific dental journals belonging to Latin America indexed to the Scopus database were analyzed during the period from 2018 to 2021. Journals that have published at least one first volume number published in the period 2018 to 2021 and articles of type were included. original. Journals that did not present the composition of their editorial committee on their website were excluded.

Process

A search was performed on the virtual platform of Scimago Journal & Country Rank (SJR) (<https://www.scimagojr.com>), of all the journal titles belonging to the area of «dentistry», in «all categories», region of «Latin America» and type «journals», the access date was February 03, 2022.

To specify the composition of the members of the editorial committees of the journals, their web page was accessed in the section «Editorial committee» Likewise, to establish some variation of the editorial committees in the years evaluated, it was used the Wayback Machine tool (<https://archive.org/web/>), which allows evaluating web pages in different periods of time [15].

Variables

The variables were: study design: descriptive, analytical and experimental, conflict of interest: none, pharmacist, labor, editorial committee and unmentioned, the number of members of the editorial committee: including all the members listed in the section «editorial committee» of its website, categorized as editor-in-chief, editorial board (associate and/or deputy editors) and advisory

board (students and/or professionals of recognized expertise whose purpose is to answer editorial questions or reviewers); the position they occupied within the article: first author, corresponding author or co-author, and the proportion of endogamy publication by number and by year.

Data collection

12 dental journals distributed in Latin American countries were included, of which 2 were excluded because they were not current in the evaluation period (Brazilian Research in Pediatric Dentistry and Integrated Clinic, *Odonto Science Journal*), and another 2 for not having access to its editorial committee (*Clinical Journal of Orthodontics Dental Press*, *Dental Press Endodontics*).

The data was collected in a file of the Microsoft Excel program version 2019, the articles were evaluated by 3 researchers. The degree of kappa interobserver agreement between the 3 authors was 0.89 for the agreement of the selection of the study variables. The degree of intraobserver agreement for each evaluator was 0.89, 0.87, 0.89. Both evaluation parameters indicated excellent agreement.

Analysis of data

Statistical quantification was performed through the statistical package STATA v 17.0 (Stata Corp. TX, USA), measures of central tendency (median, interquartile range) were obtained, percentages and frequency measures were obtained for univariate analysis. For bivariate analysis, the Mann-Whitney U test and Fisher's exact test ($p < 0.05$) were used.

Regulatory statement

The data analyzed are publicly available and freely accessible, so prior approval by an institutional ethics committee is not considered necessary.

RESULTS

2026 articles from 8 dental journals were analyzed, finding a presence of editorial endogamy of 14.52% ($n = 256$), being the journal with the highest contribution *Dental Press Journal of Orthodontics* ($n = 55$), followed by *Brazilian Dental Journal* ($n = 48$). Table I

The type of article with the greatest presence of editorial endogamy was the original

Table I - Characteristics of the dental journals selected for the study




Journal	H-index	CiteScore	Country	Number of editorial committee members	Total, original articles	Number of articles with authorial endogamy	Position in the editorial committee with greater authorial endogamy	Authorship position with greater authorial endogamy
Revista Cubana de Estomatología	7	0.30		32	110	27	Consultive Advice	Co-author
Brazilian Oral Research	50	4.10		32	414	47	Consultive Advice	Co-author
Journal of Applied Oral Science	49	4.80		15	337	24	Consultive Advice	Co-author
Brazilian Dental Journal	54	3.00		28	326	48	Consultive Advice	Co-author
Dental Press Journal of Orthodontics	26	1.90		111	158	55	Consultive Advice	Corresponding Author
Brazilian Dental Science	7	1.50		53	291	40	Editorial Board	Corresponding Author
Journal of Oral Research	6	0.50		15	165	7	Consultive Advice	Corresponding Author
Brazilian Journal of Oral Sciences	12	0.40		39	225	9	Consultive Advice and Editorial Board	Corresponding Author

Table II - Presence of editorial endogamy in some Latin American dental journals 2018-2021

Characteristics of the articles	No		Yes		p-value
	n	%	n	%	
Type					
Original article	1740	98.36	252	98.05	0.611†
short original article	29	1.64	5	1.95	
Original article study design					
Descriptive	491	27.75	56	21.78	0.000†
Analytical	498	28.15	99	38.52	
Experimental	780	44.10	102	39.70	
Interest conflict					
None	876	49.51	160	62.25	0.000†
Unmentioned	893	50.49	97	37.75	
Year of publication					
2021	436	24.64	74	28.79	0.004†
2020	466	26.34	62	24.12	
2019	450	25.43	61	23.73	
2018	417	23.59	60	23.36	
Number of authors	5	4 - 7	6	5 - 7	0.000*
Number of days from the date of sending to publication	137	92 - 192	127	76 - 173	0.003*

* Mann-Whitney U. † Fisher's exact test.

252 (98.05%), with an experimental study design 102 (39.70%), being more frequent in the year 2021 74 (28.79%), the majority did not report any conflict of interest 160 (62.25%). Likewise, the time elapsed from the date of submission to the publication of the article was statistically less in inbred articles ($p=0.003$). Table II.

Regarding the characteristics of the articles with editorial endogamy, it was evidenced that the majority were co-authors 184 (58.97%), members of the advisory council 153 (49.36%), with a single author per article 214 (82.94%) and from Brazil 223 (86.77%). Table III

DISCUSSION

Endogamy has various meanings and perceptions, placing us in a certain conceptual disparity; above all, when reflecting on it from an ethical point of view and even more so in the scientific contribution. In the present investigation, we started from the analysis of 2026 articles from 8 dental journals, finding the presence of editorial endogamy in 14.52%, agreeing with the research performed by Arteaga-Livias et al. [14] who mentions that editorial endogamy in the Peruvian Journal of Experimental Medicine and Public Health (RPESP) between 2016 and 2018 is

Table III - Characteristics of articles with editorial endogamy in some dental journals in Latin America, 2019-2021

Characteristics	n	%
Authorship position		
First author	27	8.65
Corresponding Author	101	32.37
Co-author	184	58.97
Editorial Committee Membership		
Editorial Board	124	40.00
Editor-in-chief and/or director	33	10.64
Consultive Advice	153	49.36
Endogamy authors/article		
1	214	82.94
2	38	14.72
3	4	1.55
4	2	0.77
Origin		
Brazil	223	86.77
Cuba	27	10.50
Chile	7	2.73

below 25.00%, likewise; it is concentrated between the editorial committee and the advisory council. Likewise, the review by Arteaga-Livias et al. [16] and Zdeněk [17] corroborate the data obtained

in our research, referring that they found journals with editorial endogamy ranges from 0 to 91.00% and the general endogamy of the group of Peruvian journals in the health area was 18.00%. Likewise, this result can be compared with that obtained in the study by Paz-Enrique et al. [18] who states that endogamy occurs in more than 25.00% with the participation of the scientific council or the editorial committee of a publication in the authorship or references.

Our study found that the Dental Press Journals of Orthodontics was the one with the greatest presence of editorial endogamy; a result that contrasts with that obtained by Cáceres-Claro and Torres-Suárez [19] in a Colombian bibliometric study in 2020, who reports that the journal with the greatest endogamy was *Odontos*, followed by *Ustasalud*; which is endorsed by Céspedes-Guillermo [20] obtaining the same result. In the same way, Arteaga-Livias et al. [16] found that the issues with the highest endogamy were statistically higher in the journals from Latindex directory.

On the other hand, regarding the type of article with the highest frequency of editorial endogamy, it was the original 252 (98.05%), with an experimental study design 102 (39.70%), being more frequent in the year 2021 74 (28.79%), a result that was supported by the two studies by Arteaga-Livias et al. [14,16] and Cáceres-Claro and Torres-Suárez [19]. Regarding the time elapsed from the date of submission to the publication of the article, it was statistically lower in inbred articles, a proposition that is supported by the review by Arteaga-Livias et al. [14]; who suggests that being a member of the editorial committee is a characteristic that tends to shorten the time in which manuscripts are published. Furthermore, in their current review [16] it is noted that inbred articles have a statistically lower median days from submission to acceptance; giving as a possible basis two opposite conclusions; the first that the quality of the articles of the editorial authors could be higher than that of the others due to their academic qualities that have led them to be editors or, the second; that being members of the editorial committee makes it easier for them to publish their own research.

In relation to authorship, it was evidenced that the majority were co-authors 184 (58.97%), members of the advisory council 153 (49.36%), the result could also be reflected in the study

by Zdeněk [17], who reveals that the average proportion of editorial board members who publish in their own journals ranges between 5.60% and 24.40%. A similar result was obtained by Cáceres-Claro and Torres-Suárez [19], who observed a significant proportion of endogamy since more than half of the authors were affiliated with Colombian institutions; however, it is explained by the nationality of the authors of the nine journals analyzed and the little international visibility that many of them have. The two institutions with the highest affiliation of authors were the Universidad del Valle and the Universidad Nacional de Colombia. For this reason, Dominguez-Omonte [10] suggests that in order to comply with the code of ethics, editors, reviewers or members of the editorial committee as authors should not be involved in the editorial process and should be excluded from decisions about manuscripts in which they are corresponding authors or authors. who contributes as authors. When comparing this result with the study by Arteaga-Livias et al. [14]; a concordance was found because, of the 2,885 manuscripts reviewed in his study, 520 had editorial committee members as authors. Additionally; in his previous review [14] of the 164 articles published, between originals and brief originals, 30 had a single author and eight had two authors belonging to the editorial committee of the Peruvian Journal of Experimental Medicine. Reviewers or editorial board members as authors should not be involved in the editorial process and should be excluded from decisions about manuscripts for which they are corresponding or contributing authors.

In the analysis based on the number of authors related to editorial endogamy, our research resulted in a higher proportion with a single author per article 214 (82.94%). The study conducted by Arteaga-Livias et al. [14] made it possible to demonstrate that of the 164 articles reviewed, 30 had a single author and eight had two authors. Contradictory to his new publication of 2021 [14] in which he stated that the number of authors was found to be higher in inbred articles. For Cáceres-Claro [19], the results of his research reflect that a range between 1 and 12 authors was found, with a median of four authors per article. This result could also be reflected in what was described by Céspedes-Guillermo [20], finding similar results in the Colombian dental journals analyzed in the present study,

Finally; regarding the conflict of interest and importance of this study, it is imperative to mention that editorial endogamy is one of the factors that most influences the indexing or not of serial publications; In addition, the abusive use of endogamy brings negative consequences for publications. However; we must focus on the final good of any publication, which ends up on benefit of students, users, technicians and health professionals involved in scientific growth.

CONCLUSION

The presence of editorial endogamy in some dental journals in Latin America was low, this finding is more frequent in original articles, mostly from the advisory board and as co-author. Additionally; it was found that endogamic articles took less days in editorial process.

Author's Contributions

CRAC: Conceptualization, Methodology, Software, Formal Analysis, Investigation, Resources, Writing – Original Draft Preparation, Writing – Review & Editing, Visualization, Supervision, Project Administration.

LASI: Validation, Investigation, Resources, Data Curation, Writing – Original Draft Preparation, Writing – Review & Editing, Visualization, Supervision. JRRCR: Validation, Investigation, Resources, Data Curation, Writing – Original Draft Preparation, Writing – Review & Editing, Visualization. KMHC: Investigation, Resources, Data Curation, Writing – Original Draft Preparation, Writing – Review & Editing, Visualization, Supervision.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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Regulatory Statement

The data analyzed are publicly available and freely accessible, so prior approval by an institutional ethics committee is not considered necessary.

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